



CONNECTICUT DENTAL ASSISTANTS ASSOCIATION

"Setting a New Professional Standard"

Established 1941

Support Testimony to the Public Health Committee for Raised H.B. 5133

Public Health Committee

Tuesday, February 16, 2016

Gary L. Jacobs, C.D.A., R.D.H., B.S., Ed., M.P.A.

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and Members of the Public Health Committee,

Expanded Function for Dental Assistants and Hygienists is a viable and proven work substitution model to help in the oral health needs of citizens. The US Military has used such models for over 40 years and EFDA legislation has been successfully practiced in states for over 30 years. There are currently over 40 States that have enacted some form of EFDA legislation and this includes many of our regional States such as Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

The increased capacity to provide needed dental services through Expanded Functions legislation could only have a positive impact on the citizens most in need while providing employment opportunities in a cost effective manner for an underutilized workforce.

- As of December 14, 2015, there were 636 Dental Assistants in Connecticut holding Dental Assisting National Board Certification that have the potential to become productive Expanded Function dental team members with reasonable additional education and training. Thereby increasing access to care through increased efficiency while reducing costs in delivering services.
- EFDA utilization can improve efficiency in delivery of dental care in non-profit settings
- The implementation of EFDAs at places such as the Department of Health and Addiction which includes Connecticut Valley Hospital with over 600 patients; the Department of Children and Families; the Department of Corrections; the Department of the Mentally Disabled; and the UCONN School of Dental Medicine can improve capacity for public care by providing practitioners with more time to treat currently underserved populations to include the elderly, special needs, and Medicaid recipients.

The Expanded Functions Dental Auxiliary helps meet labor market needs in allied dental personnel.

- The Connecticut Department of Labor statistics project the Dental Assisting profession as a field of demand with high growth at a rate of 8.4% with an estimated 122 annual employment opportunities.
- Provides a career ladder for retention of dental assistants and new employment opportunities. Studies demonstrate that Certified Dental Assistants are retained in the

dental profession for 14.5 years. This is 3 times longer than non-certified dental assistants.

- EFDA legislation is consistent with the ADAA/DANB National Model to address our State's workforce needs in providing adequate dental services to our citizens.
- EFDA law is a proven cost effective means to increase utilization capacity through efficient training of an already existing underutilized workforce.
- The labor substitution model through EFDA law has been proven in over 40 states and in practice in some states such as Ohio for over 30 years.
- EFDAs have also been utilized by the US Military for approximately 40 years. The United States Dental Command (DENCOM) studies "showed productivity increases of between 92% and 155% over baseline."

Provides for public safety

- Dental Assistants would first be required to become Certified Dental Assistants through the Dental Assisting National Board. Consequently, Expanded Function Dental Assistants would have to be certified in Infection Control, Radiation Health and Safety, and General Chairside skills that are not currently mandated.
- As Certified Dental Assistants, Expanded Functions Dental Assistants would be mandated to lifelong learning (12 continuing dental education credits per year and hold a current DANB- accepted CPR certification) in order to maintain their CDA and EFDA certification status.
- Written examinations for Expanded Functions Dental Assistants certification will also be provided by the Dental Assisting National Board.
- Per current Commission on Dental Accreditation Standards, EFDA education programs will be required to have a minimum number of classroom, laboratory, and clinical training hours and provide for competency for each task at the laboratory and clinical levels.
- EFDA education and clinical training will be provided by an institution that currently has a Commission on Dental Accreditation program (Dental, Dental Hygiene, or Dental Assisting).
- All of the tasks allowed to be performed by EFDAs are reversible procedures.
- EFDAs will work and perform EFDA procedures under the direct/indirect supervision of a licensed dentist.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

The Connecticut Dental Assistants Association

Respectfully Submitted,

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